



# Southeast Idaho UPDATE



## **EPA's newsletter for the Pocatello and Fort Hall areas**

*The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, and local governments all share the responsibility for protecting the quality of soil, water, and air in Southeast Idaho. EPA periodically publishes this newsletter to help keep you informed about the work we are doing in your area.*

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## **VISIT US ON THE WEB!**

Visit EPA's Region 10 website for more information about EPA activities in your community, and elsewhere in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington!

**[www.epa.gov/r10earth](http://www.epa.gov/r10earth)**

## EPA comes to Pocatello!

We are pleased to announce that **Sue Skinner** has been hired to fill EPA's new environmental coordinator position in Pocatello. We would like to thank the Pocatello and Fort Hall communities for all of your input and feedback over the course of the hiring process. Sue is looking forward to learning more about the environmental challenges facing the area, and building partnerships to help solve them.

This is a homecoming of sorts for Sue, who is a Twin Falls area native (Buhl to be exact) and received her undergraduate degree from Idaho State University in geology. She has spent the past twenty-four years working for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, including the last nine years in Reno, Nevada, on hazardous waste issues primarily related to mining sites and landfills. Sue brings senior level experience on a wide variety of technical areas.

Sue's role will continue to be defined over the coming weeks, but will include work on issues ranging from stormwater to mining to the FMC cleanup. Being based in the local community will allow her to keep in close contact with many key environmental stakeholders, including the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, local officials, advisory panels, citizen interest groups and the public.

Her office is co-located with the Department of Environmental Quality at 224 South Arthur (just north of the Idaho State Journal building). She can be reached by phone at 208-478-1680, or by e-mail at [skinner.susan@epa.gov](mailto:skinner.susan@epa.gov).

Feel free to contact Sue if you have environmental concerns you'd like to discuss, and be sure to say "Hello!" if you see her around town. She's looking forward to meeting and working with as many people as possible, and getting a chance to do some fishing and cross-country skiing too!



*Meet Sue Skinner*

## Simplot fined for late notification

EPA recently announced the J.R. Simplot Company will be required to pay a penalty of \$14,176 for failing to notify local emergency response officials of a sulfur dioxide emission in a timely manner. The release occurred on March 13, 2001, due to a plant malfunction that caused 80,000 pounds of sulfur dioxide to be released into the air from its phosphate fertilizer plant in Pocatello. Under the federal Emergency Planning and Right-to-Know Act, the company is required to immediately report such incidents to local officials. Simplot was 12 hours late in

notifying the Idaho State Emergency Response Commission, and did not notify the counties until the following day.

In addition to the fine, Simplot agreed to provide \$25,000 worth of hazardous materials response equipment to Power County Disaster Services, and an additional \$25,000 worth of communications and hazardous materials response equipment to the Bannock County Emergency Operations Center and the Pocatello Fire Department.



## EPA seeks information to assist FMC cleanup

EPA would like to talk with members of the public, Shoshone-Bannock Tribal members, local officials, company representatives, former FMC employees, and others who may have ideas or information that would be helpful in the environmental cleanup at FMC. With the company's recent decision to shut down the facility, we are particularly interested in gathering information about former processing areas at the plant. These processing areas were not considered in EPA's current cleanup plan because the facility was still operating at the time the plan was developed.

EPA projects managers were in the area to talk with people during the week of February 18th, but we are still interested in

hearing from you. If you would like to share your concerns or information with EPA, please call one of our project managers listed below.

Linda Meyer	Sylvia Burges
(206) 553-6636	(206) 553-1254
meyer.linda@epa.gov	burges.sylvia@epa.gov

*Or call EPA toll-free at 1-800-424-4372*

If you would prefer to discuss your concerns with environmental staff of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, please contact:

Jamess Skunkcap	Susan Hanson
(208) 478-3908	(208) 478-3903
jamess@ida.net	susanh@ida.net

## Stormwater at Construction Sites

Protecting local water resources is critical. One important step toward this goal is preventing the loss of topsoil from recently-cleared construction sites. Runoff from these sites can muddy the local waterways, choking off fish and other aquatic life from the nutrients they need to survive. The good news is that techniques for minimizing soil erosion are well understood, and can be extremely effective when properly used.

In Idaho, local ordinances generally contain clearing, grading, and excavation requirements that help control erosion. In addition, storm water discharges from construction sites larger than 5 acres must be permitted by EPA. This permit requires the contractor to apply sediment and erosion control practices during the active phase of construction.

The International Erosion Control Association (IECA), in cooperation with the Idaho Association of General Contractors and EPA Region 10, recently conducted one-day training sessions on erosion and sediment control at several locations in Idaho, including Pocatello. To find out more about the



*Runoff from construction sites can harm water quality*

information presented in these trainings, contact IECA at (800) 455-4322, or visit their website at [www.ieca.org](http://www.ieca.org).

Later this spring, look for EPA to host additional training opportunities to educate contractors about controlling stormwater runoff at construction sites, and compliance with EPA permit requirements.

**For more information, visit EPA's stormwater webpage at [www.epa.gov/r10earth/stormwater.htm](http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/stormwater.htm).**



## Curious about CAFOs?

If you think CAFOs have something to do with bright lights in the night sky, or mysterious happenings in Roswell, New Mexico, it's time to talk! CAFO is an acronym for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, which refers to areas at dairy and beef cattle farms where the animals are fed.

### *Why is it an environmental issue?*

CAFOs are typically areas without any vegetation, such as concrete pads or compacted dirt. If these areas are not properly designed to control runoff, then animal waste can easily be carried by rain to nearby sources of water. Animal waste in water is both an environmental issue and a human health issue. For instance, animal waste is high in nutrients, such as phosphorus. When it enters a stream or lake, it can deplete the oxygen required to support fish and other aquatic life. This is a particular problem in places like the Portneuf River

that already fall short of state standards for oxygen, nutrients and other indicators of water quality. Animal waste can also contain bacteria and viruses that are harmful to humans, including *E. Coli* and *Salmonella*.

Other environmental problems related to CAFOs include improper land application of manure which can run off into surface waters, and areas where animals have direct access to streams, rivers and irrigation canals.

### *How are CAFOs regulated?*

Agreements are in place between EPA, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ), Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), Idaho Cattle Association, and the Idaho Dairymen's Association, that assign ISDA as the lead agency for regulating CAFOs in Idaho, with EPA and IDEQ maintaining an oversight and training role. EPA retains the lead for facilities located on

tribal lands, including the Fort Hall Reservation. EPA will continue to work with these and other state agencies to identify and eliminate animal waste discharges to Idaho's waters.

If you would like to know more about CAFOs, please contact David Domingo at (206) 553-0531, or e-mail at [domingo.david@epa.gov](mailto:domingo.david@epa.gov).



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Region 10



**To learn more about the information in this newsletter, or to be added to or removed from the mailing list, please contact:**

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### **Other Local Environmental Agency Contacts:**

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